DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 437 226 PS 028 234

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TITLE	Unpaid Child Support: The Abuse of American Values.
PUB DATE	1999-09-00
NOTE	20p.
PUB TYPE	Opinion Papers (120) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Child Support; *Child Welfare; *Children; Divorce; *Fathers; *Individualism; Parent Child Relationship; Parent Responsibility; Prevention; Values
IDENTIFIERS	*Child Support Enforcement

ABSTRACT

Noting that fewer than half the single mothers in the United States receive complete and regular child support payments, this paper discusses reasons for unpaid child support, examines whether stricter enforcement of child support obligations will help solve the overall problem, and proposes another option for solving the problem of unpaid child support. Typical cases of unpaid child support are presented to illustrate the range of situations considered. The paper examines the current trend of forcing fathers to pay child support and describes recent legislation to increase fathers' financial contributions or to locate delinquent fathers. The paper notes that child support payment enforcement is not sensitive to fathers' individual situations, such as differences in social ties or changes in the family structure, and asserts the need to consider how to help fathers and mothers increase their incomes. Further, the paper maintains that legislation has contributed to the dissolution of families because financial contributions are guaranteed to divorced and never-married mothers. It is argued that American family dissolution and problems in obtaining child support are related to American values of freedom, individualism, and independence. The paper maintains that stricter enforcement of child support does not help to solve the overall problem because it is related to the abuse of the values of freedom, individualism, and independence. The paper concludes by proposing an after-school prevention program targeting junior and senior high school African American males in high unemployment areas. Contains 28 references. (KB)

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Unpaid Child Support: The Abuse of American Values

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Unpaid Child Support: The Abuse of American Values

The United States of America is one of the strongest economic and political powers in the world. Therefore, America's standard of living should also be one of the highest among the world's many nations. Yet when we examine the welfare of American children, we can see discrepancies. According to a 1995 Census Bureau Report, approximately one out of every four American children live in poverty (Huston, 1996). Children make up 40% of the total poverty-stricken population in this rich nation. This figure also means that children have become the poorest of the poor in all age groups for the first time since the American government started to collect data on poverty in the late 1950s (Scarbrough, 1993). Compared to other developed countries (i.e., 9.3% in Canada, 9.0% in Australia, 7.4% in U.K., 4.6% in France, 3.8% in Holland, 2.8% in Germany, & 1.6% in Sweden), America has the highest percentage of children living in poverty (Hembrooke, Morris, & Bronfenbrenner, 1996).

One way of understanding why poverty among children in America is a more serious problem than the average American realizes is to look at family structure. Today one out of two marriages ends in divorce (Furstenburg, 1995). There were 16.9 million children who lived in single parent households in 1991, and this figure included 26% of all children under age 18. In addition, 86.4% of these children lived with only their mothers (Scarbrough, 1993). The poverty rate of families with children under the age of 6 is as follows: 88% live in unmarried single mother households, 34% in single father households, 77% in divorced mother households, and only 16% in intact households. (Hembrooke, et al., 1996).

These data show that poverty among children is most serious in households headed by single mothers. Scarbrough (1993) pointed out four reasons why single mother households are more likely to fall in the poverty range than intact families. First, one income is usually smaller than two. Second, women usually make less money than men. In 1992, the average income for women was only three-fourths that of men (Board on Children and

Families, 1994). Third, full time working with minimum wage does not guarantee quality of life above the poverty line (Scarbrough, 1993). Finally, many single mothers with children do not receive child support. Every year, approximately 30 billion dollars of child support for the welfare of about 23 million children goes unpaid. Less than half of all single mothers receive complete and regular support. Ninety-seven percent of parents who are delinquent in paying child support are men (Boumil & Friedman, 1996).

This paper considers (1) why so much child support goes unpaid, (2) "whether stricter enforcement of the child support obligations of deserting fathers will help solve the overall problem" (Boumil & Friedman, 1996, p. 10), and (3) if stricter enforcement will not help solve the overall problem, what are some other options.

1. Reasons for Unpaid Child Support

The diversity of American families and parenthood makes the question of why so much child support goes unpaid a difficult one to answer. The media tend to represent only two kinds of fathers: good fathers who support families financially and actively participate in raising a child, and bad fathers who do not care about their own children and do not pay child support. However, this perspective is too simple for a complete understanding of the problem. In reality, contemporary American families vary in the kinds of fathers: biological fathers, stepfathers, married fathers, never-married fathers, fathers who take part in actual child care, workaholic fathers, fathers who reject paternity of their children, and so on (Board on Children and Families, 1994). The reason for the existence of so many kinds of fathers is simple--there are many circumstances under which children are conceived in America.

A few typical cases of unpaid child support will help to show the range of situations which must be accounted for in trying to come to terms with the problem.

Case 1. Casual sex produces children, and fathers do not want to pay child support.

> Deanna and Rick enjoyed a casual dating relationship for several months without any intention of making a permanent commitment to each other. They engaged in sexual relations only a few times before it became evident to both of them that they had no future together. Even when they did have sex, Rick tried to be careful to use reliable birth control. Deanna notified Rick nearly three months into a pregnancy that she had conceived a child. Rick has never known whether it was accidental, but in any event Deanna agreed to an abortion. The social relationship between Rick and Deanna trailed off over the next months. Although Rick inquired several times about the abortion and offered to pay for it, Deanna never "got around to it," and eventually it became too late. A child was born, and Rick refused to acknowledge paternity or to provide child support (Boumil & Friedman, 1996, pp. 16-17).

Masters, Johnson, and Kolodny (1992) have named this kind of sexual activity "recreational sex." In this type of sex, couples engage in sexual activity primarily for pleasure, and the emotional involvement and intimacy between the couple is much less than between a married couple. If a pregnancy results from recreational sex, the couple will take one of two different options, depending on the development of emotional involvement and intimacy between them. If they fail to deepen emotional involvement and intimacy, the man will usually ask the woman to abort, and the woman will make a choice between abortion and becoming a single mother. If they can deepen emotional involvement and intimacy, they will marry. In a typical case, like the one above, the woman decides to have the child despite the man's request for her to get an abortion. Feeling betrayed, the man will likely refuse to admit to paternity.

Case 2. Cohabitation produces children, and fathers do not want to pay child support.

> Ginny left Stan more than five years ago after he found out that she was having an affair with Peter. Ginny and Stan were never married, but he thought they had made a commitment to each other and was devastated when Ginny left. There was a court battle over the custody of their five-year-old daughter, but, without being married to Ginny, Stan was advised that he didn't stand a chance. Eventually the custody was, in fact, awarded to Ginny, although Stan was given liberal visitation. He was also given a significant child support, most of which has never been paid. Ginny married Peter soon after and Stan decided to move out of state. The child maintains some

> contact with Stan, but it is limited by the distance. Recently, Stan has also married and is planning a family with his wife. He makes less and less effort to pursue visitation with his daughter, and is grateful that Ginny makes little effort to pursue support (Boumil & Friedman, 1996, pp. 12-13).

Masters, Johnson, and Kolodny (1992) have named this kind of sexual activity "relational sex." In this type, couples engage in sexual activity as one aspect of developing their emotional involvement and intimacy. Therefore, a cohabiting couples' emotional involvement and intimacy is somewhat less than that of a married couple. In a typical case like the one above, after the child is born, the mother gets custody and the child is adopted by the mother's new husband. The biological father and child relationship becomes weaker and weaker after the mother's remarriage.

Case 3. Casual sex produces children, and fathers want to pay child support but they can not.

A young teenage never-married father of a 7-month-old boy (who lives with his mother and grandmother) stated as follows.

> I do give what I can. But I have to live, too. I have to keep my clothes clean. I have to, you know, take care of my utilities and all that other stuff, and my toiletries, and I have to do stuff like that. Nobody's gonna do it for me now that I am grown; she (i.e., mother of a baby) just have to understand that for now. Until one day maybe I can get a place of my own and take care of him best that I can ... I feel sad though I am not really ready to live together with a female (Furstenberg, 1995, p. 194).

Adams, Pittman, and O'Brien (1993) pointed out the difficulty in obtaining data on young fathers who have never married. First, until recently, young parenthood researchers focused only on mothers. Second, there could be many never-married fathers who are not even aware they have a child or who refuse to admit to paternity. Third, data is limited to a small number of fathers who participated in researchers' studies. Fourth, some young fathers have children from different girlfriends. We have no idea what the ratio is between the number of young mothers and fathers. Finally, young mothers are unlikely to write down the father's name on their baby's birth certificate.

From the limited data it seems that casual sex produces children, and fathers want to pay child support but cannot. Young fathers in cases such as #3 described above tend to have behavioral problems and low academic achievement. Therefore, these young fathers may likely be engaged in illegal activities and have unstable, low-wage jobs. In the past two decades, more and more low wage jobs, which cannot save the poor from poverty, have been created (Duncan, 1991 ; Garbarino, 1992). Because these young fathers' income is low and unstable, their living arrangements are also poor. Among unmarried young fathers aged 19 to 26, about 66% percent live with their parents or extended family members, 16% live by themselves, 12% live with a partner of the opposite sex, and 8% live with a nonrelative (Adams, Pittman, & O'Brien, 1993). In addition, Johnson, Levine, and Doolittle (1999) suggested that many of young African American and Latino nonresidential fathers in inner cities are able to fit into this category.

Case 4. After divorce, the father can not pay child support.

> David and Joanne were divorced two-and-a-half years ago, leaving two children in Joanne's physical custody. David was awarded substantial visitation (weekends and two evenings per week), which he fulfilled regularly. The child support, however, was a problem from the start. His and Joanne's incomes together were barely enough to run their modest house. When David moved into his one-bedroom apartment, he was unable to pay both his own bills and give enough to Joanne to run the house. Joanne was unwilling to sell the house, which was the only asset that she was awarded, primarily because the mortgage payments were less than would be the rent on an apartment adequate for herself and two children. David's search for a higher paying job was fruitless, and a second job would substantially reduce his time spent with the children. Joanne was advised that bringing David back to court would be expensive and probably wouldn't yield much anyway. Eventually, David's inability to maintain his child support obligations affected his relationship with the children, as the bitterness between himself and Joanne was perpetuated by this continuing dispute. Visits were consumed by the ongoing economic crisis, and the children's limited understanding of what it was all about left them with a degraded image of their father in their minds (Boumil & Friedman, 1996, pp. 11-12).

In addition to the case above, some fathers become unable to pay child support after they remarry, become injured, or become ill. However, the cases where fathers cannot pay child support because of making less money, remarriage, injuries, and sickness are not the majority. Boumil and Friedman (1996) reported many cases that men with $50,000 or more

yearly income failed to make regular child support payments or did not pay at all. Besides, after divorce incomes of custodial parents (i.e., mothers) and children decrease by 30 to 73%, whereas fathers' incomes increase 10 to 40% (Boumil & Friedman, 1996).

Case 5. After divorce, fathers neglect to pay child support, even though they are able to pay financially.

> Fred always felt put down by Stella when they were married. He felt that she took every opportunity to make him feel small and inadequate. She even once had an affair on him and threw it up to him every chance she got. When they divorced Fred's anger didn't go away, and now he could get back at her with the child support payments. He knew she needed the money and it made him feel powerful to play games with payments (Boumil & Friedman, 1996, pp. 111-112).

A large body of research indicates that interparental conflict after divorce has a deteriorating effect on child support (Arditti & Allen, 1993). Some divorced fathers do not pay because they think their child support payment is too expensive compared to other states; others do not pay because they want to start a new life (Boumil & Friedman, 1996). Several researchers have pointed to the selfishness and emotional immaturity of these divorced fathers (Arditti & Allen, 1993; Boumil & Friedman, 1996; Coleman & Ganong, 1992; Mandell, 1995). In addition, "typical child support awards are so low that few fathers can truly claim the inability to pay" (Coleman & Ganong, 1992, p. 447). Coleman, Ganong, Killian, and McDaniel (1999) sampled 160 men and 264 women in Missouri and asked to read a fictional story of child support. They found that 78% of average Americans in their sample thought that a nonresidential father in the fictional story should pay an amount of obligatory child support that was less than the amount of the state's official guideline of child support. The result might indicate that there is a discrepancy between the average American's expectation of amount of child support and the state's official guideline.

There are also more complex cases in which fathers stop payment after their divorced wives start having intimate relations with an opposite-sex partner (i.e., cohabitation or remarriage). In this case, there are two options for biological fathers. One is competing for relatedness of a child with stepparents. Stepparents often win by trying to create emotional

and physical distance from the biological father. For example, they may make a child call a stepfather "Dad," move far from the biological father's residence, or reject the biological father's visits by making up excuses (Coleman & Ganong, 1992).

One biological father, whose name is Walter, said as follows.

> In MY particular case, my kids don't CALL me- Call me Dad, they call me [Walter]. That was two years ago. They call the NEW guy Dad... They don't want me to be a part of their life, they just want my MONEY (Mandell, 1995, p. 103).

The second option is assuming the transition of parenthood from biological father to a stepfather. Many men think that marriage is a "package deal." They think that when their divorced wives start to have a sexual relationship with someone else, their end of the deal is over (Furstenburg, 1995). In reality, however, there are many cases in which children fail to be adopted by the stepparents. In addition, the divorce rate in remarriages is even higher than the divorce rate in first marriages. Furthermore, the divorce rate of remarriages is even higher when there are children in the household from a previous marriage (Coleman & Ganong, 1992).

These examples show that we cannot take a simple perspective on the problem by speaking of "good dads" or "bad dads." Unfortunately, no statistics currently exist about how many fathers are in these various categories. Of course, there are fathers who pay child support. The amount of the father's income, however, does not make any difference in child support payment (Boumil & Friedman, 1996). There are many situations which lead to non-payment. The next section considers the current policy of dealing with the unpaid child support problem.

2. Will Stricter Enforcement of The Child Support Obligations of Separating Fathers Help Solve The Overall Problem?

The current policy trend in the child support issue is to force fathers to pay. This trend can be explained by three factors: the empowerment of women's liberation groups, the anti-

welfare Republican federal government from 1980 to 1992, and "the ever-increasing burden on the state and federal programs" (Boumil & Friedman, 1996, p. 10).

The most exemplary expression of this trend was the Family Support Act of 1988, which was meant to increase the financial contribution of biological fathers to their own children (Furstenberg, 1995). However, the role of federal government is limited in supervising how each state implements its own plans. Therefore, there was great variation both in the amount of child support and in the way each state implemented this child support legislation (Coleman, Ganong, Killian, & McDaniel, 1999; Furstenberg, 1995). Under this act, there are seven possible enforcement methods for collecting child support: income or wage assignments, direct wage withholding, W-4 reporting (in some states), tax refund intercept, attachment of property, liens on property, and trustee process (Boumil & Friedman, 1996). The amount of child support award also varies because its calculation method is different in each state. In some states, the amount of child support award is based on solely nonresidential parent's income. In other states, it is based on both the incomes of custodial and noncustodial parents (Coleman, Ganong, Killian, & McDaniel, 1999).

It used to be very difficult to chase delinquent fathers who moved to another state, but a Uniform Interstate Family Support Act (UIFSA) was recently approved by Congress. Under UIFSA, no matter where a non-paying father moves, the child support order will be sent directly to his new employer (Boumil & Friedman, 1996). If all means of enforcement are ineffective in making fathers pay child support, now the government can arrest these fathers as criminals because of the enactment of the Child Support Recovery Act of 1992 (Boumil & Friedman, 1996). Therefore, the federal government now has more means of enforcing payment of child support than ever. Thanks to these efforts, the average annual amount of child support received per individual increased from $893.7 to $1010.5 from 1985 to 1987 (Garfinkel & Robins, 1994). Could this mean that stricter enforcement is a real solution for the problem?

There are several points which deserve consideration and improvement. First, child support payment enforcement varies from state to state, and it is not sensitive to the peculiarities of each father's situation. From the policy makers' viewpoint, biological fathers are regarded simply as financial providers. Therefore, fathers complain that with the current policy, biological fathers have virtually no power or rights to influence the raising of their children (Furstenberg, 1995). Although there are child support guidelines in each state which usually consider the income of the absent parent, these guidelines are not sensitive to the differences in social ties between a child and a biological parent or family structure changes, like remarriage of ex-spouses (Boumil & Friedman, 1996). Many divorced fathers who are delinquent in their child support complain that the current legal system is unfair to fathers' rights and does not consider the individual differences in their current situations (Mandell, 1995). Pearson and Anhalt (1994) found an interesting result in their study of mothers who pay child support to children living with their fathers. Although nonresidential mothers were ordered to pay significantly less money than fathers ($115 vs. $209), the percentages of their income was virtually the same (26% vs. 23%). In addition, 85% of nonresidential mothers paid child support without delay. This figure shows that unpaid child support is exclusively the problem of American men.

Second, it is also necessary to consider how to help fathers and mothers increase their incomes. Current policy (i.e., stricter enforcement of child support obligation for deserting fathers) works for rich fathers, but not for poor ones. Although there are social programs to help increase mothers' incomes, there are virtually no programs to help increase poor fathers' incomes. For example, there is a JOBS program (Jobs, Opportunities, and Basic Skills) for mothers on welfare, but this program is available for fathers in fewer than five states (Furstenberg, 1995). Adams, Pittman, and O'Brien (1993) have proposed that the government should raise the minimum wage and establish more jobs for young unmarried fathers and mothers. Recently, Johnson, Levine, and Doolittle (1999) reported that their

Parents' Fair Share program was effective for training social and job skills to low-income fathers.

Third, the Family Support Act of 1988 does not actually do anything to preserve marriage. In addition, AFDC payment encourages pregnant women to favor remaining single (Furstenberg, 1995). It used to be that pregnant women married in order to attain a father's financial support, but because of current policy, pregnant women can receive child support even without marriage. Furstenberg (1995) described how the Family Support Act of 1988 actually made it easier for family members to live separately. No-fault divorce laws also aid family dissolution in America by making it possible to divorce simply by filing divorce papers (Boumil & Friedman, 1996).

As one part of the current policy to increase fathers' financial contributions after divorce, the number of joint custody arrangements is increasing (Boumil & Friedman, 1996). A large body of research shows that the more social ties the fathers have, the more likely they are to pay child support (Boumil & Friedman, 1996; Braver, Wolchik, Sandler, Sheets, Fogas, & Bay, 1993; Pearson & Anhalt, 1994). There is still a debate about the merits of sole custody and joint custody. Sole custody can offer children a stable environment, but few social ties to their other biological parent (Arditti, 1992). Joint custody can offer children social ties to both biological parents, but children must move from one place to another frequently; and it is often difficult to make decisions because ex-spouses have different life styles. Although courts decide between joint or sole custody according to "the best interests of the children" (Boumil & Friedman, 1996, p. 96), it is unclear what the conditions are for "the best interests of the children" (Boumil & Friedman, 1996).

3. If Stricter Enforcement Does Not Help Solve The Overall Problem, What Should We Consider?

As discussed above, the Family Support Act of 1988 only makes it possible to force wealthy biological parents to pay child support, and it seems to work perfectly. Ironically,

this trend has also encouraged the dissolution of families in the U. S. because financial contributions are guaranteed to divorced mothers and never-married mothers (Furstenberg, 1995). However, this trend towards dissolution in the American marriage is totally against "the best interests of the children" because children need both parents for their healthy development (Biller, 1982; Board on Children and Families, 1994; Boumil & Friedman, 1996).

As an example, the Board on Children and Families (1994) reported gender differences in interactions with children. Mothers spend a great amount of time taking care of children. Fathers spend more time playing with their children, teaching them to regulate emotions and to socially interact with other people. Fromm (1956) stated that children assume their mother's love is unconditional, but think that they need to learn social rules in order to obtain their father's love. In a study of four- to eight-year-old children, children whose fathers were absent for the first few years of their lives had a poorer relationship with other children than children whose fathers were present (Biller, 1982). Therefore, we should think about how marriages can be preserved because children need both parents. In future research, effective family preservation programs should be designed and examined.

A small number of researchers have pointed out that the source of American family dissolution is linked to two fundamental American values: freedom (Eggebeen & Lichter, 1991) and individualism (Coleman & Ganong, 1992; Lester, 1995). Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, and Tipton (1985) admitted that freedom and individualism are predominantly American values, traditional and embedded. I would like to add one more value, independence, to these two hard-core American values. These three are deeply interconnected values which sustain each other. In order to have a concept of freedom, human beings first establish the concept of individualism. In order to establish the concept of individualism, a person must become independent from the social demands of others. Therefore, both individualism and independence are prerequisites for achieving freedom.

From an individualistic perspective, the relationship between society and the individual is as follows.

> The individual is prior to society, which comes into existence only through the voluntary contract of individuals trying to maximize their own self-interest (Bellah et al., 1985, p. 143).

In an individualistic society, people try to be independent of each other in as many aspects as possible and exercise their own freedom in order to maximize their own self-interests. The United States of America, the most individualistic country on earth (Triandis, 1995), has a unique educational system which emphasizes individual differences, freedom, and independence (Stevenson & Stigler, 1992; Tobin, Wu, & Davidson, 1989). In contrast, Japan, a collectivist society, has an educational system which emphasizes the equality of each member of the society, empathy with and harmony between members in a society, and interdependence (Lewis, 1994; Tobin, Wu, & Davidson, 1989). In contrasting preschools' educational philosophy in these two types of societies, Tobin, Wu, and Davidson (1989) state as follows (pp. 147-148):

> In our discussions with Americans we heard much about the importance of recognizing that no two children are alike, little about all children being created equal. We heard much about the importance of treating children differently according to their different abilities, temperament, and needs, little about the importance of treating children equally. We heard much about helping children become uniquely themselves, fully individuated, and self-actualized, little about helping children feel identified with each other, aware of their basic sameness, equality, and shared destiny. Perhaps a cost of American emphasis on individualized preschool education is an inevitable silencing of egalitarian concerns, whereas the cost of the Japanese and Chinese emphasis on equality in preschool education is less emphasis on the needs of children as individuals.

Several researchers have pointed out the selfishness of divorced fathers who refuse to pay child support even though they are financially able to do so (Arditti & Allen, 1993; Coleman & Ganong, 1992; Mandell, 1995) or who engage in casual and irresponsible sexual activity (Boumil & Friedman, 1996). Selfishness and irresponsibility may result from individualism, independence, and the abuse of freedom. Mandell (1995) showed anger in reporting that no separated fathers whom she interviewed even expressed concern over the

welfare of their children as a result of their unpaid child support. Instead they focused on the loss of their rights and their diminished self-esteem, the unfairness of the legal system, and the evilness of their ex-wives. These men have grown up in a society and educational system which emphasizes freedom, individualism, and independence. Due to their educational and cultural backgrounds, rich separated dads think that their rights and self-esteem are more important than the welfare of their own children; and they use their freedom not to follow court orders because they believe that child support laws are based on an unfair legal system. They feel they have a right to be independent of social regulations.

Before the 1960s' sexual revolution, American society assumed that all sex was procreational sex , that is, sexual activity for producing the next generation (Masters, Johnson, & Kolodny, 1992). However, because of today's emphasis on sexual freedom, recreational sex and relational sex are more popular activities than procreational sex. The problem is that it is not clear who will take responsibility for the children who are produced from recreational sex and relational sex. American society should discuss and create some kind of guidelines for the responsibility of children who are produced from recreational sex and relational sex. Some researchers have emphasized that the government should help never-married young fathers to fulfill their responsibility to their children (Adams, Pittman, & O'Brien, 1993) or encourage families to "postpone childbearing until both parents are able to meet its financial and emotional responsibilities" (Furstenberg, 1995). These statements reflect the feeling that in contemporary America, freedom is exercised without consideration for the responsibility of sexual activity and its products (i.e., children).

Stricter enforcement of child support payment does not help to solve the overall problem because the unpaid child support problem is deeply related to the abuse of fundamental American values: individualism, freedom, and independence. Recently, Johnson, Levine, and Doolittle (1999) reported the Parents' Fair Share Program that teaches and trains social and job skills to fathers who want to pay but cannot. Although this program is reported to be effective, it is an intervention program. Therefore, in the last section of this

paper, I would like to propose research for a possible prevention program to solve the child-support problem.

As mentioned previously, many existing programs have been designed for females, not males. Therefore, this proposed prevention program should target males. Sonenstein, et al.'s study of 1992 (as cited in The Board on Children and Families, 1994) reported that a high pregnancy rate was found among African American adolescents who live in high unemployment areas. They also found that there were three factors that contributed to the high pregnancy risk of adolescent males. The first factor is "having a mother who had been a teenage parent" (p. 9). The second factor is "believing that premarital sex is acceptable behavior" (p. 9). The third factor is "having an employed mother" (p. 9). Accordingly, the subjects of this program will be junior and senior high school African American male adolescents (grades seven to twelve) in high unemployment areas. In addition, these male adolescents will share the three high risk factors above. The program will be held during after school hours for these targeted male adolescents. The program has four main components.

(1) Once a week, teach these male adolescents what they have to do if they become fathers.
- Under the Family Support Act of 1988, they have to pay mandatory child support.
-Show videos that describe the lives of newborn babies. For example, teach them that infants cry every two to three hours during the night.

(2) Teach usage of contraceptives and distribute (once a week).
-Prevention of STDs.

(3) Teach group sports or gymnastics (everyday).
-In Japan, physical education in terms of group sports is used for male adolescents to control themselves. It is assumed to be an effective way to release frustration. If group sports are not

familiar to the American people, then other sports or gymnastics can be used as a replacement.

(4) Teach male adolescents good non-school related skills in the labor market (twice a week) -As has been shown in this paper, these high risk male adolescents tend to exhibit poor performance in school. Therefore, teach the skills which are attractive in the labor force (e.g., auto repair skills, computer usage skills, etc.).

This program has one program administrator, two to three physical education teachers, one or two job skills teachers, one or two sex education teachers, and one teacher who teaches parental responsibilities. These teachers and the program administrator must be African American men who are married and have children. Since ethnicity of teachers, the program administrator, and students are matched, participating African American adolescents can relate to the administrator and teachers.

In order to measure the effects of this program, the program is evaluated as follows. First, choose two groups of African American male adolescents who are identical in age, number of participants, and socioeconomic status of male adolescents' parent(s). Second, one group of male adolescents is given this program and the other group is not provided any intervention. The program duration is three years. Before and after the program, the number of related teenage pregnancies in these two groups will be compared. A t-test may be used to measure the differences in teenage pregnancy in these two areas. If there is a significant decrease of pregnancy in the experimental group over the control group, the program will be effective in helping to solve the child support problem. If there are no children, there is no child support problem.

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